

# THE PROSPERITY GAP – IDEA STARTERS

## PASSPORT TO PROSPERITY

### ACCELERATING EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS FOR NEWCOMERS

#### THE CONTEXT

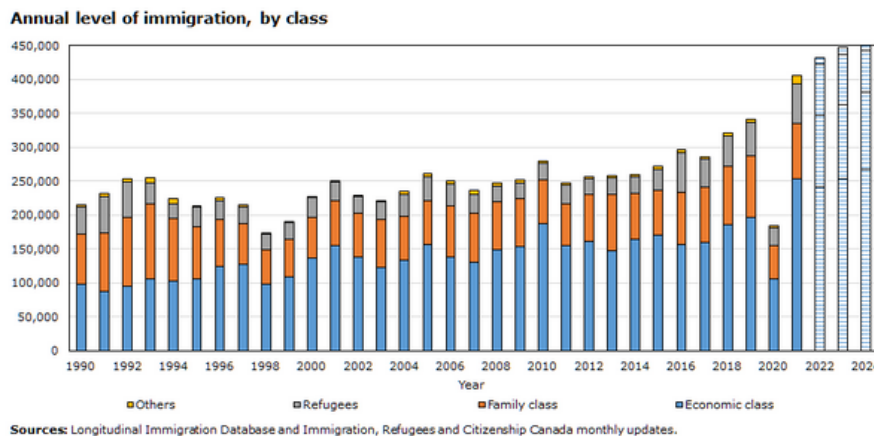
As a global immigration hub, newcomers play a vital role in the Greater Toronto & Hamilton Area’s (GTHA) economic and social success. However, newcomers also face long-established systemic barriers to the labour market. This comes at a time when the GTHA is facing significant and growing labour market gaps.

Recognizing the heightened success that comes from inclusive settlement approaches, **how can employers work alongside public and non-profit sectors to remove the systemic barriers newcomers face in accessing labour markets?**

#### WHY IT MATTERS

Newcomers are a key part of Canada’s labour force, including helping to address growing labour shortages – from 2016 to 2021, immigrants contributed to four-fifths of Canada’s overall labour force growth.<sup>ii</sup>

Systemic barriers to employment contribute to poorer earning and long-term employment outcomes for immigrants in comparison to counterparts born in Canada, as well as a lack of diversity in senior positions across sectors.



#### WHAT WE KNOW

Under Canada’s Immigration Levels Plan 2023–2025, the federal government has set significant immigration targets over each of the next three years. Many of those newcomers are expected to settle in the GTHA.<sup>iii</sup>

- A record 431,645 people became permanent Canadian residents in 2022, and a further 465,000–500,000 permanent resident admissions are expected each year until 2025.
- Historically, approximately 50% of all newcomers to Canada settle in Toronto, Montreal, or Vancouver.<sup>iv</sup>
- Over half of recent immigrants living in Canada were admitted under the economic category. Of these, just over one-third (34.5%) were selected through skilled worker programs, and another one-third (33.6%) through the Provincial Nominee Program.<sup>v</sup>
- 12.4% of Toronto’s population growth over the past 10 years can be attributed to external immigration.<sup>vi</sup>

Despite having established highly desirable skills, credentials and work experience through the immigration process, many newcomers (and especially those who are racialized) continue to face systemic barriers to the labour market<sup>vii</sup> including:

- Non-recognition of international work experience
- Devaluation of foreign credentials in regulated professions
- Non-inclusive employer culture and HR practices
- Lack of established professional/social networks

## SPOTLIGHTING ACTIONS & SUCCESSES

### TORONTO REGION IMMIGRANT EMPLOYMENT COUNCIL

The Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) works to address the persistent problem of immigrant underemployment, and supports organizations to become more inclusive, and help newcomers expand their professional networks and understand the local labour market. TRIEC offers Career Advancement for Immigrant Professionals program that supports employers with their internal talent mobility strategy. The program helps employers to retain and advance their existing newcomer talent, while also providing immigrant professionals with the opportunity to realize their full potential.

### ACHÈV

Achève connects people to opportunities that help them achieve their full potential, providing the resources and guidance needed. Through high-quality programs and personalized services, Achève supports career development, language education and settlement success in our communities, and delivers employment, newcomer, language and youth services. The organization also works collaboratively with employer and community partners to ensure they have the tools and capacity to support others.

### ACCES EMPLOYMENT

ACCES Employment provides a wide range of effective job search programs and services, including online services that are available to jobseekers locally, nationally and internationally for approved pre-arrival immigrants. Virtual Services include information sessions, webinars and online programs, as well as VERA, a Virtual Employment and Resource Attendant.

### WINDMILL MICROLENDING

Windmill is a national charity that provides affordable microloans to skilled newcomers to help restart their careers in Canada and bridge the gap of income inequality & labor shortage in the country. Windmill's microloans help newcomers pay for the costs of accreditation, training and career development. Funded by the public and private sectors, Windmill has delivered more than 9,000+ microloans to new Canadians, helping convert their potential into prosperity.

**NOTE:** This document is intended to provide general background and spotlight actions and innovations in the space. It is not intended to be a complete or definitive set of facts about the topic. Wherever possible, sources have been cited. We apologize for any errors or omissions.

## KEY TERMS

### **Permanent Resident:**

A permanent resident is someone who has been given permanent resident status by immigrating to Canada but is not a Canadian citizen. Permanent residents are citizens of other countries.<sup>viii</sup>

### **Economic Immigrant:**

This category includes immigrants who have been selected for their ability to contribute to Canada's economy through their ability to meet labour market needs, to own and manage or to build a business, to make a substantial investment, to create their own employment or to meet specific provincial or territorial labour market needs.<sup>ix</sup>

### **Credentialism:**

Belief in or reliance on academic or other formal qualifications as the best measure of a person's intelligence or ability to do a particular job.<sup>x</sup>

## REFERENCES

- i. [Research to Insights: Immigration as a Source of Labour Supply](#), Statistics Canada, 2022.
- ii. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/221026/dq221026-eng.htm>
- iii. Statistics Canada, [Canada Immigration Levels Plan 2023-2025](#), 2022.
- iv. Statistics Canada, [Immigrants make up the largest share of the population in over 150 years and continue to shape who we are as Canadians](#), 2022.
- v. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/221026/dq221026-eng.htm>
- vi. [City of Toronto, 2021 Census: Citizenship, Immigration, Ethnic Origin, Visible Minority Groups \(Race\), Mobility, Migration, Religion Backgrounder, November 2022](#)
- vii. [Banerjee, Rupa, 2022. Time to Change Focus: A Review of Immigrant Labour Market Barriers, Outcomes and the Role of Employers in Canada. Institute for Canadian Citizenship, 2022.](#)
- viii. [Government of Canada, 2022: https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/new-immigrants/pr-card/understand-pr-status.html](#)
- ix. [Government of Canada, 2022: https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3VD.pl?Function=getVD&TVD=323293&CVD=323294&CLV=0&MLV=4&D=1](#)
- x. [Oxford Languages, 2023](#)